

**North Dakota School for the Deaf
Future Services Plan (FSP) Transition Team**

Meeting #6

Thursday, April 15, 2010

Meeting Summary

Meeting Goals

- To review and affirm the foundational structure and process for the NDSD Future Services Plan (FSP) Initiative;
- To review, discuss, revise and approve the draft Transition Team Meeting Summary from March 25, 2010;
- To review and discuss the results of the FSP Progressive Survey;
- To review and discuss public input and comments;
- To receive informational presentations regarding current components of the educational and service delivery systems for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing in North Dakota;
- To discuss, review and revise the draft components of the Future Services Plan for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing; and
- To identify the “next steps” in the process including any additional data, materials, information and presentations.

Members Present

Terry Solheim, Diane Rice, Fred Bott, Carol Lybeck, Nancy McKenzie, Connie Hovendick, Michelle Rolewitz, James Johnson, Dave Oehlke, Larry Robinson, Holly Pederson, Cynthia Taustad and Cindy Wetzell.

Staff Present

Nancy Skorheim and Carmen Grove-Suminski.

Facilitated by

The Consensus Council, Inc.

Interpreters

Rena Bitner and Kathy Obregon.

Welcome, Introductions, Foundational Structure and Process Review

Participants were welcomed to the meeting and provided self-introductions. The consensus-based decision-making process and ground rules were reviewed and affirmed by the participants. The participants also reviewed and affirmed the Transition Team values, the proposed agenda and the meeting materials.

Participants reviewed the draft Meeting Summary from March 25, 2010 and corrections were noted in the body of the summary relative to costs at the Bismarck Public Schools as well as Special Education services. There was a question and discussion regarding the definition of “consultative” services. It is a difficult concept to define as it varies from school to school and it was agreed that these services are generally not less expensive than direct services. Recent research indicates that there is a greater need for time for itinerant teachers for consultative services with/for students. Consultative services may also refer to co-teaching that is not widely used in North Dakota. The meeting summary was approved with the corrections noted and will be posted on the NDSD website. Participants reviewed the recent results of the Progressive Survey and noted areas of general agreement.

Review and Discussion of Public Input and Comments

Participants reviewed the public input that has been provided at prior meetings. No email comments were received since the March meeting. Transition Team members shared information from their constituency groups. NDSD Alumni met recently in the Twin Cities. The alumni are concerned that NDSD continue to have a historic role in education of the deaf and hard of hearing. There is concern about NDSD having to address the needs of adults who may have “failed” in mainstream education. It is important for parents to have advocates to help them with decision-making for their children in addition to listening to/learning from professionals. There have been great changes in the field of deaf education over the last two decades. At a recent meeting of parents from northwest North Dakota, all had received services through NDSD Outreach and were very positive about the quality of services. Many parents reported that they have advocacy services provided and are appreciative of the non-judgmental approaches to education and services for their children.

Draft Transition Plan Component Review and Discussion

Task/Goal #1: Service Gaps, Needs and NDSD Outreach Plans

The facilitator provided an overview of the Transition Plan (4-column grid) developed by the Planning Team and the full TT engaged in a need-by-need, gap-by-gap review, discussion and identification of their recommendations concerning each of the needs/gaps (the revised grid is attached to this summary). The TT was only able to complete work on about 1/3 of the grid, but noted that there was a fair amount of overlap from the population groups/profiles, nor was the TT able to move on to the specifics of the other Tasks/Goals:

Task/Goal #2: Potential Partnerships

Task/Goal #3: Research and Trends

Task/Goal #4: Transition Team Process

Task/Goal #5: Revenue Generating Activities

Task/Goal #6: Site and Facility Plan

The group specifically acknowledged that all North Dakota teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing are highly qualified and must meet very specific standards as set by the state’s Education Standards and Practices Board and agreed that ND has stringent standards for educators. They agreed on the importance of having an appropriate IEP team be formed for each student and stressed the inclusion of a deaf educator (although Federal law mandates that an IEP team must contain a person who is knowledgeable regarding the disability, it does not

specify an educator of the deaf/hard of hearing). The participants agreed that both the IFSP and IEP teams would benefit by having a certified teacher of the deaf as a required member and that if this were the case, many of the gaps in needs and services would be more quickly identified and closed.

Identification of Next Steps

The TT indicated their desire to continue the review process throughout the next meeting. Additionally, the Planning Team was asked to edit and “clean up” the planning grid and develop a draft outline of the potential purpose and structure of a Center for Excellence for review at the next meeting. Larry and Dave agreed to explore the potential of a legislation “fix” regarding infant screenings and needed equipment. Michelle offered to provide the group with information regarding proposed legislation for changes to the interpreter certification legislation.

It was agreed that the May 13, 2010, meeting would be held in Devils Lake to allow for a campus site plan report from the architects.

Progressive Survey

The participants completed the progressive survey forms and turned them in for tabulation.

Summary Comments

Participants were asked to provide a summary comment and they are as follows

- We made a lot of progress.
- I agree about making significant progress, but I can't underestimate what's left before us. We still need to work to reach consensus on a final document. I think that sometimes we get too involved in the specifics - details that aren't necessarily up to us. I'd like to see us focus more on the broader components of the recommendations.
- We did some good work. There is a lot left to do.
- I agree that we have done some good work and that we need a good picture. I'd like to see how what we are doing fits with what DPI is expecting. We need to establish more specifics and feedback from DPI. I hope that Gary Gronberg will attend future meetings.
- Like the idea of the Center of Excellence and the idea of a 4-year interpreter program.
- Remember the phrase “love thy neighbor.” When we are involved in discussions here, we can disagree. When the meeting is over, we need to leave any disagreements right here and not hold grudges.
- We are moving ahead right now.
- We have a very good start.
- Difficult to find the broad vs. the specific in some areas. However, the Center of Excellence is just the right balance.
- I'm happy to have these discussions. They are about the dreams I have had for a long time.
- I think we have passed the struggles; we will be one of the unique groups that will actually get something done.
- I'm excited about the terms we are using (Center of Excellence) and look forward to sharing these ideas with the NDSD teaching staff. Our facilitator is a good taskmaster, keeping us on track.

- North Dakota needs to shine and become a leader in this area.

Note: The staff and administration of the NDSD received some very positive praise for their work and efforts. It was noted that this group has a solid foundation upon which to build and the NDSD staff laid that foundation – current and past.

Public Comment/Input

Laurel Golding representing LRSC indicated the college's interest and excitement about the potential opportunities to cooperate on the expansion of the interpreter-training program. She noted that to date, there have been mixed results with students who have gone from the 2-year LRSC program to out-of-state 4-year programs.

A parent who provided comment to the TT during the December meeting returned to provide an update on the situation regarding her 4-year old son who is now enrolled at NDSD. She told the group that previously she had believed that efforts should be directed to developing comparative services for preschool children throughout the state. However, since her son's enrollment at NDSD she has concluded that the services cannot be replicated in "pockets" around the state; the level of education and caring could not be matched in a smaller environment. There are staff members who have worked at NDSD for entire careers and this cannot be replicated in other settings. In turn, she shared her concern for children who are not receiving services at NDSD – they are being left out of the level of services her son receives.

Alex Dressler, graduate student at Minot State University, indicated that she was grateful for the opportunity to "sit in" on the TT's meeting. She was appreciative of the general discussions and hearing from parents of children who are deaf/hard of hearing. She indicated her support for the development of regional preschools and mandating newborn hearing screenings.

The meeting was adjourned by consensus of the group with best wishes for safe travels.

Future Meetings:

April 2010

Planning Team Meeting

Wednesday, April 21, 2010

10:00 a.m. to Noon

Bismarck, ND - face-to-face and conference call.

May 2010

Transition Team Meeting

Thursday, May 13, 2010

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Lake Region State College – Chautauqua Room

Devils Lake, ND

Planning Team Meeting

Wednesday, May 19, 2010

10:00 a.m. to Noon

Bismarck, ND - face-to-face and conference call.

June 2010

Transition Team Meeting

Thursday, June 17, 2010

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Location to be determined

Planning Team Meeting

To be scheduled – if needed

Bismarck, ND - face-to-face and conference call.

Working Draft